



R. J. EASTWOOD

THE
AUTOPSY
OF
PLANET
EARTH

PART TWO

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*For my wife Susanne for her encouragement,
her endless reading of drafts,
and all those who have supported
me along the way. Thank you.*

*“R. J. Eastwood’s science fiction novel **The Autopsy of Planet Earth** was the **overall winner of Book Talk Radio’s Book of the Year!** Eastwood has written a very compelling novel. It is thought-provoking, discussion-worthy, and hard to forget. The moral, ethical, and theological struggles that the characters in this novel face are at times overwhelming, many of them actual issues we are facing (or ignoring) today ... Eastwood shines with his imagination and insight as to the human race and what it is capable of changing, learning, etc. So, much to think about and so much to discuss with others! This is a tremendous book for a book group to read!”*

Review by Juliapicks1.com

THE AUTOPSY OF PLANET EARTH *PART TWO*

A Novel by
R.J. Eastwood

*“I am more convinced than ever
that we are not alone.”*

Steven Hawking
Theoretical Physicist



TABLE OF CONTENTS

[CHAPTER 1](#)
[CHAPTER 2](#)
[CHAPTER 3](#)
[CHAPTER 4](#)
[CHAPTER 5](#)
[CHAPTER 6](#)
[CHAPTER 7](#)
[CHAPTER 8](#)
[CHAPTER 9](#)
[CHAPTER 10](#)
[CHAPTER 11](#)
[CHAPTER 12](#)
[CHAPTER 13](#)
[CHAPTER 14](#)
[CHAPTER 15](#)
[CHAPTER 16](#)
[CHAPTER 17](#)
[CHAPTER 18](#)
[CHAPTER 19](#)
[CHAPTER 20](#)
[CHAPTER 21](#)
[CHAPTER 22](#)
[CHAPTER 23](#)
[CHAPTER 24](#)
[CHAPTER 25](#)
[CHAPTER 26](#)

[Other Book by the Author](#)

[Author Biography](#)

Chapter 1

Despite Legna's assurances that the trip would be perfectly safe, a healthy dose of fear lingered with both Gabriel and Catherine. It was not a question of what might happen, but the inescapable feeling of what could happen. Their instructions were to rendezvous with Legna in the Oval Office no later than 7:30 PM. When they arrived, Ms. Mosby was not at her desk.

Gabriel shrugged. "Well, that's disappointing,"

"What is?"

"I was hoping to introduce you to a direct descendant of *Vlad the Impaler*."

They knocked and entered the Oval. Legna was perched high in his chair behind the presidential desk intently reading a document. Although President Conrad had paid tribute to her and pilot Skip Galinski in this very room, Catherine canvassed the space with a sense of awe. Shifting uneasily from one foot to the other she waited, but there was zero recognition from Legna.

"The proper thing would be to ask how I've been," Catherine said with an edgy tone.

The alien did not reply.

"Something wrong?" She asked.

The alien's head came up, he leaned back, folded his hands, and stared curiously at Catherine as if seeing her for the first time. From the adjoining office, a second alien entered. Down to the minutest detail, this new entity was an exact duplicate of the one sitting behind the desk.

Baffled at the site of two identical aliens, both were lost for words.

"Catherine, it is good to see you again. Are you well?"

It was Legna who had entered—or so they assumed.

Legna gestured to the alien sitting behind the desk. "May I present Citizen Roama."

With a slight bow of his head, Citizen Roama acknowledged them.

Gabriel's eyes flitted from one alien to the other. "I don't understand."

"You are familiar with Ms. Mosby."

"Yes, of course."

"It was necessary that when humans approach this office, they be greeted by one of their own. Citizen Roama is also Ms. Mosby. Citizen Roama will now occupy this space in my absence, and none will be the wiser."

"How did Roama become—"

"There will be time for further clarity, Gabriel."

Gabriel and Catherine were speechless at the sight of two aliens so identical,

there was no way of telling them apart. Roama slipped from the chair, bowed his head to Legna, and exited to the adjoining office without uttering a single word.

“How will Ms. Mosby’s absence be explained?” Gabriel asked.

“Ms. Mosby shall report an illness. She will be absent until our return. Catherine, it pleases me that you are at my side again and will travel with us. Are you excited?”

“Curious, if nothing else.”

“Gabriel has shared your concerns.”

“Gabriel is correct.”

“Please be free to articulate.”

“We placed our lives on the line for you and—”

“Willingly as I recall.”

“That doesn’t change what has occurred since.”

“It is for the welfare of survival of your race, Catherine.”

“And for that, we are eternally grateful. My concerns are how you are carrying it out.”

“And how might that be, Catherine?”

“With an iron fist. Your removal of the Eiffel Tower, for example.”

“Did I not articulate that protest gatherings would not be tolerated?”

“But a handshake gets more results than a slap in the face.”

“You speak in metaphors, Catherine.”

“I think you know exactly what I mean.”

“The protests were not peaceful. Violence, looting, and destruction of property cannot be tolerated.”

“But your removal of the tower was a form of destruction.”

“We shall discuss this further. Let us depart, our journey awaits.”

Catherine looked to Gabriel with a *here we go* look and whispered, “We must be drunk out of our minds to have agreed to this.”

“Ditto for me.”

It was a cold and windy thirty-one degrees as Gabriel and Catherine approached the south lawn where Marine One, the Sikorsky VH-4A helicopter, normally landed. Three inches of loose-packed snow blanketed the ground. All exterior lights had been extinguished, and anyone required to be in the complex had been instructed to stay clear of the area. No one would witness their departure.

Apprehensive about what was about to happen, Gabriel and Catherine looked to the cloudless night sky. A slice of the moon hung like a bright night lantern. In the distance, dim stars flickered. Both were wondering why they had agreed to a voyage through space that could very well prove foolish, if not dangerous, undertaking.

“Looks inviting up there,” Gabriel whispered.

“So does a summer sky just before a storm arrives,” Catherine whispered back. “I’m not sure we’ve made the right decision.”

“If you have reservations, you can still back out.”

Catherine took a deep breath and looked up to the sky. “Huh, and go to my grave wondering what I missed out there? Not on your life.”

Legna, standing several feet ahead, turned to them. “Are you galvanized?”

The alien’s use of euphemisms amused Gabriel. “More like anticipation.”

“Do not fear what is beyond your knowledge. Embrace the unexplored, and you shall act with surety.” Raising his right arm, he pointed to the night sky. “There you will find legions of uncharted dimensions. One day mankind will travel freely within their boundaries and revel in their majesty. Our transport arrives.”

A mass of swirling air in the shape of a mini-tornado whipped up the powdery top layer of snow some twenty feet in front of them.

“What is that!” Catherine gasped and took a step back.

Gabriel took her hand and squeezed it. “Nothing to worry about. I’ve seen this before.”

“But what is it?”

“You’ll see.”

The whirling wind stopped. It became eerily quiet. Like a flickering firefly, a dime-sized fissure of intense white light appeared high above the ground. Like a flowing river of hot lava, the light splayed out shaping itself into what looked like a doorway and a ramp that led to nowhere—there was nothing visible beyond it.

Catherine swallowed hard. “Holy...!”

Her reaction amused Legna. He bowed his head to her. “After you, Catherine.”

Her eyes narrowed to narrow slits. “Ah, you first.”

“As you wish.” Legna approached the shimmering ramp and disappeared through the doorway.

With childlike excitement, Catherine whispered, “Where did he go, Gabriel?”

“I have no idea. Like Astronomer Carl Sagan was fond of saying... *Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.* I think we’re about to get it.”

Taking Catherine’s hand in his, Gabriel led her to the lighted ramp. Guardedly, he set his right foot on what appeared to be nothing more than a flat wave of shimmering light. To his relief, it proved to be solid. Cautiously, carefully, they continued up the ramp and stepped through the lighted doorway. Just as mysteriously as it had appeared, the doorway dissolved behind them leaving no visible sign it had been there. They were now in actual interior space and wondering how they got there. It was perfectly round and far smaller than either of them expected—maybe twenty-five in diameter at most. The interior was white from top to bottom. There were no windows, flight controls, or seats, just an empty white space devoid of any characteristics except for a flying white dove emblem embedded in the center of the floor.

Gabriel looked mystified. “Who is going to fly this thing, and how?”

“A sensory implement shall guide us.”

Wide-eyed, Catherine scanned the empty space. “A what? To where?”

Legna offered no further explanation. "Please step back to the wall."

As they did, the floor beneath the dove logo dissolved into a rectangle. Two rows of seats mounted on a platform silently rose. The seat at the far end of the first row was upholstered in red. On the right arm-rest, a star-shaped light, about the size of a half-dollar coin, pulsed blue. The rest of the seats were covered in a gray microfiber-like fabric.

"Radiation," Catherine asked, "... how is it deflected? What about weightlessness? Will we be able to breathe normally on your planet?"

"You have many questions."

"I have many concerns."

"You need not fear for your safety," Legna assured them. "I admit to not knowing how it all works. That as you humans say, is above my pay grade. As for Ecaep's atmosphere, it is the same as Earth's... only cleaner. Please be seated wherever you wish."

Legna settled in the red chair.

With uneasiness. Catherine took a seat in the second row, Gabriel sat next to her. The seats were small, obviously designed to accommodate diminutive aliens. Their knees jutted up toward their mid-section, their elbows rubbed against one another. Gabriel mumbled something under his breath and moved one seat over. Instinctively, both searched for safety belts but found none.

"How does this thing defy gravity?" Catherine asked.

"Silent rotating mechanisms reverse magnetism allowing spin-stabilized magnetic levitation. It is the propulsion required to cause centripetal acceleration. Further definition is beyond my knowledge."

The blue light on Legna's chair pulsed amber. "We shall take our leave now."

Gabriel and Catherine stiffened in anticipation. But to their befuddlement, there was no movement or sound, just unnerving quiet and stillness.

They waited. A minute passed, then a second.

"When do we leave?" Gabriel asked.

"Forgive me, I am a deficient host." Legna rose and strolled to the white metallic wall to his right, swiping his right hand across a small area. An oval window appeared. "Come... witness your planet."

Gabriel and Catherine exchanged nervous glances.

"Come, come, it is quite safe."

Catherine reached the window first. Whatever trepidation she had was replaced by sheer exhilaration. They had risen to the edge of Earth's atmosphere within a couple of minutes.

"Holy mother of God," she murmured.

Gabriel peered over her shoulder. "Jeez, it's magnificent!"

Down below Mother Earth sat like a sparkling jewel cradled in the vast blackness of space. In the area where the planet was in daylight, large swatches of green, brown, and blue dotting the surface. Intricate artistic swirls of scattered clouds covered portions of the sky. Where the sun had already set, it was equally mesmerizing with its dazzling display of lights. The heart-stopping sight, that

only a brave group of human astronauts had been privileged to witness, left them mesmerized and speechless as their craft moved further away.

“I’ve never seen anything so magnificently beautiful,” Catherine said.

“There are thousands of stars in your galactic area and hundreds of earth-like planets circling those stars that are the home to many civilizations,” Legna said. “You have never been alone. Why many of your fellow citizens continue to believe otherwise remains a riddle.” The light on the arm of the red chair pulsed red. Legna swiped a hand across the window. It dissolved back to a seamless white wall. “Please return to your seats.”

Five minutes later, they experienced a slight jolt followed by a low hissing that sounded like air being released under great pressure.

“Gabriel, Catherine, we have arrived.”

The entire trip had taken less than ten minutes.

The glowing door and ramp reappeared.

“We shall disembark now.”

Catherine whispered to Gabriel. “From this point on, it’s hocus-pocus time.”

Following Legna, Gabriel and Catherine stepped gingerly through what was now a real door and ramp and the outside of the shuttlecraft was also visible—an undistinctive matte gray with no visible markings. Nearby in the all-white space was a second identical craft.

Gabriel was brimming with questions, but before he could fire off the first, a faint sucking sound drew their attention. To their right, a door opened in a section of the wall and two entities entered. To their astonishment, they mirrored Legna down to their clothing.

“What in the?” Catherine murmured.

Avoiding direct eye contact with either Gabriel or Catherine, the two bowed to Legna. Legna acknowledged them with a slight nod.

“My fellow citizens welcome you as honored guests.”

Gabriel’s voice pitched up. “You’re all identical!”

“Ecaepians are all self-same.”

“You’re what?”

“An explanation shall be rendered in due course. Come now.”

Perplexed, Gabriel and Catherine followed a few steps behind Legna while the two aliens marched behind them. They moved along a corridor that continually veered left, an indication they were following the outer curve of the ship. Catherine peered over her shoulder at the two aliens following. Eyes straight ahead, neither displayed interest in the two humans in front of them.

“How big is this ship?” Gabriel asked.

“Our transport is comprised of three cylindrical elevations,” Legna explained. “Each serves a specific function. We are on promenade one. Beneath lies the force components that provide thrust and power support for all functions.”

He stopped in front of what looked like a pencil-thin gray outline of an arched door—it snapped inward and to the left without making a sound.

“Our journey begins with the validation of your well-being. Please enter.”

Gabriel peered into the dimly lit room. “What happens in there?”

“An analysis of your anatomy.”

“A physical examination?”

“Yes, Citizen Catherine. It will ensure your comfortable journey to Ecaep— please enter.”

With apprehension, Gabriel looked to Catherine. “This is your purview, doctor. After you.”

As Catherine set foot inside, the illumination increased. The light source appeared to be coming from the white, metallic walls. The circular space was approximately twelve feet in diameter. Dead center of the room was a clear, round, Plexiglas-looking tube that extended from floor to ceiling.

“Please remove your clothing and position yourselves one in front of the other.”

Gabriel’s brow creased. “Uh... wait a minute.”

“The procedure will cause no discomfort, Citizen Gabriel. You are familiar with cytology, Citizen Catherine?”

“The diagnosis of abnormalities and malignancies.”

“If any are found corrective measures will resolve imperfections.”

“Just like that?” Gabriel glanced at Catherine.

She raised an eyebrow and shrugged.

Folded neatly on a small stand to the left of the cylinder were two jumpsuits the same color, design, and material as the aliens.

“Upon completion of the process please change into this apparel.”

Legna stepped into the hall and the door silently closed.

“What’s with his calling us Citizen Gabriel and Citizen Catherine,” Gabriel whispered.

“Beats me. Come on, lose the duds.” Catherine began unbuttoning her blouse. “Let’s get this over with.”

“If you’re sure this is safe.”

“It’s just a body scan, more advanced than what we have, but a body scan just the same.”

Turning his back to Catherine, Gabriel kicked off his shoes. Freeing his belt buckle, his trousers fell to the floor. Next went his underwear and socks. Last to go was his shirt. He turned to face a nude Catherine. His eyes never left hers.

“It’s not like we haven’t seen each other in our birthday suits before, Gabriel.”

“Front or back?” he grouched.

“Back.”

As they approached the cylinder, a small light flashed blue and a door slid open. Catherine positioned herself in the back, Gabriel in front.

A spot-on Gabriel’s lower right shoulder blade caught her attention. “What’s this? A mole?”

“A birthmark.”

“I haven’t noticed it before. You should have it looked at.”

“Can we just get on with this, Doctor?”

Legna's voice boomed over an unseen speaker. "Please be silent and stand perfectly still."

A second later, two laser-like orange beams shot over their heads and proceeded to cascade down through their naked bodies. Catherine's beam stopped briefly at her hip before continuing to her feet, paused there for a moment, then returned to the top.

Gabriel's beam stopped just above his waistline. It lingered there for several seconds before continuing to his feet. Reversing direction, the beam stopped at the small of his back. There was a rapid clicking sound like a dead car battery trying to start. Gabriel felt a low charge of electricity at the L-4, L-5 lumbar position. There was no discomfort or pain, just a creepy sensation that his lower spine was being manipulated. Finally, the beam proceeded up and disappeared.

Legna's voice came over the speaker again. "You may dress now."

Exiting the tube, Catherine took one of the jumpsuits and pulled it up to her waist just as Legna entered. She turned her back to him. "Just a minute, please."

"I have little interest in your anatomy, Citizen Catherine."

After adjusting his jumpsuit, Gabriel placed a hand on his lower spine. "I felt something moving inside me."

"A posterolateral disc bulge in combination with facet arthropathic was discovered."

"Yeah, from an injury I received some years back."

"It would have led to bilateral neural foramen stenosis. It has been repaired."

"Just like that, I'm cured?"

Ignoring Gabriel, Legna addressed Catherine. "You are a perfect human specimen devoid of defects."

"Thank you." She glanced back at the tube. "We desperately need that technology back home."

"And so, you shall. Let us continue."

Also, by author R.J. Eastwood

MIDNIGHT BLACK

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Midnight Black has been honored with the Author's Circle Novel of Excellence, five stars from Readers' Favorite for fiction, the bronze award for fiction from The International Review of books, and the Titan Literary Award for outstanding fiction.



“When plunder becomes a way of life for men, they create for themselves in the course of time a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it.”

Frederic Bastiat, French Economist. 1801-1850

SYNOPSIS:

Billy Russell's career as a DEA officer abruptly ends when he cold-bloodedly executes the man who committed a heinous crime against him. Sentenced to twenty years of hard labor in total isolation from the outside world, he's suddenly and without explanation is released on parole three years early. Returning to society, he learns that an isolated nuclear attack between Pakistan and India has spread primal fear of a nuclear holocaust allowing autocratic billionaires to have seized control of the world. Their reign of terror has brought rampant poverty, crime, disease, and drug addiction. As a condition of his parole, Billy is assigned to a government drug enforcement unit in Boston. He soon makes a gruesome discovery—the unit is a cover for a government-sanctioned assassination squad. Approached by a secret underground dissident group planning to overthrow the authoritarian world government, Billy joins them to help end the demonic reign of tyranny. In doing so discovers the shocking truth of the government's true mission and finds himself embroiled in the wildest conspiracy he could have ever imagined.

REVIEWS FOR MIDNIGHT BLACK

“Imagine James Patterson's Alex Cross but with a science fiction twist.

Midnight Black is a character-driven thriller that has something to say and knows how to tell a suspenseful story.” Literary Titan Reviews

“Author Eastwood not only knows how to write but know how to keep you interested from the first page to the last.” 5-Stars - Harry Milman, Best Selling Author, ‘Forensics: The Science Behind the Deaths of Famous People.’

This book is absolutely faultless as a reading experience. I recommend Midnight Black as a must-read for fans of thriller, spy, and end-of-the-world fiction.” 5- Stars - K.C. Finn

“Wow! Wow! Eastwood has written a very provocative novel that is wonderfully written and keeps you on the edge of your seat. Wow! Powerful writing!” 5-Stars – C. Bregg

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

During his film and television career, **Robert J. Emery**, who writes novels under the pen name, **R. J. Eastwood**, has written, produced, and directed feature motion pictures, television documentaries, national television commercials, political campaigns, and industrial films. Some of the highlights of his career include the award-winning ninety-one-episode television series **The Directors** for Starz/Encore, the award-winning four-part mini-series, **The Genocide Factor** for PBS, the award-winning documentary **For God & Country: A Marine Sniper's Story** for MSNBC, and the award-winning motion picture, **Swimming Upstream**, for the Lifetime Television Network.

Mr. Emery has been honored with over seventy-five industry awards including seven years in a row at **The New York Festivals**, two **Golden Eagles** from The Chicago International Film & Television Festival, top honors at **HoustonFest**, and the **Best Dramatic Feature Film Award** for **Swimming Upstream** from the Los Angeles Angel City Film Festival. His previous novel, **The Autopsy of Planet Earth**, was awarded the **Author's Circle Novel of Excellence for Fiction**, the **Readers' Favorite Award for Best Fiction**, the **Pulp Pen Award for Fiction**, and the book of the year award from **Book Talk Radio Book**.

Mr. Emery is a member of
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